



*Shadow of the Whip.
Thurs. 18 Nov. 1977
Darshan Diary.*

Interview with Raj

Raj is a large, smiling-faced Indian sannyasin, and a lieutenant colonel in the Indian Army, stationed in Poona. (At the time of writing, proceedings for his discharge—at his request—are underway to relieve him of his duties as a member of the army.)

In an interview with him some days after this darshan, Raj recounted how he had heard about Osho through a sannyasin he met by chance in Poona. He went to the ashram and there met two sannyasins.

Raj: I said, "Excuse me, I believe there is some person called Osho and he purports to be a god man, so I want to say hello to him." They said, "You can't say hello like that! Why don't you first come and see some of our meditations that we do?"

At that time they were doing them at the Empress Gardens—Dynamic Meditation in the morning and Whirling in the evening. So the next morning I went to the Empress Gardens and saw Swami Swabhawaji. With him there was a person with drums and another person with tablas. They played a very weird sort of music, which stayed in the head and hit you inside.

What was going on? I saw people screaming like banshees. They were like a herd of cattle that hadn't been fed for days—and it scared me silly! I thought, “Where have I landed up? And what is all this yelling about? Nothing to do with seeking God! ”

Then the “hoo” business began and then Swabhawaji said, “Stop!” And these people froze. A number of spectators like me, were watching all this madness. One said to another, “These people are nuts and they should be locked up in lunatic asylum. ”I felt the same and I said that it was utterly ridiculous—why should a person come and scream like someone who has gone haywire or something? What for? So I left that place quite worried.

In the evening I went and saw the Whirling, and that also got me worried. I said, “What the hell is going on? Just people revolving on their own axis, just for the heck of it!” I mean, it didn't make sense at all because what I had come to learn in my earlier beliefs was that such things were done in an orderly manner. Even God was to be approached through logic.

I had been through all that—you pray for two hours and maybe He will see you for one minute, or two hundred hours and He will see you for one hour. It was a give-and-take relationship, it was a straightforward deal; “Look God, I'll be with you in ten minutes if you can give me one minute back. You come and give me a darshan.” And you did Yoga and asanas and all those things.

But seeing these people whirling around in total abandon and singing and swaying and making these

weird noises like “hoo” .. It did something to me when I heard it.

But I came back next morning. I was very thoughtful about it. I had decided not to come back but I did. That day another person was there and he said, “Instead of watching-this is the second time I’ve seen you here-(It was Maitreya) why don’t you try?”

I said, “Try what?” He said, “You just try. Just come and close your eyes and do this.” And so I joined in-I started Dynamic Meditation. I didn’t close my eyes completely for it and I didn’t put anything on the eyes because I wanted to see. Every now and then I’d sort of sneak open my eyes and see what the hell was going on.

It wasn’t a totally frustrating experience-I mean, I felt something. There were a lot of vibrations going around-I don’t know what it was, but the idea came into my mind that maybe there is something here but I’m not understanding it.

So that afternoon I decided to go and see the boss of the show. I came here in the afternoon and Ma Mukta was here in a chair in this room(the library).

I walked in and said, “Who is in charge here?” I had a very solid and commanding voice, which had been cultivated over the years of bullshit in the army and I knew my voice was always frightening. Ma Mukta almost fell off her chair.

I said, “I want to see the boss-the man in charge.” She said, “Well, you can’t see him just like that. You

must have an appointment.”

I said, “Look, is he here or not?”

She said, “Yes.”

I said, “Then why the hell cant I see him? I must see him—I’m in a hurry. If I don’t see him now then the whole thing goes up in smoke.”

Ma Mukta tried to sidetrack me by polite questions like what was my name etc. I said, “I can’t wait. Where is his room?” I got up from the chair. Ma Mukta looked alarmed. I said, “Don’t worry. Just point out his room and I will go and see him.”

Then this chap came into the room with Maitreya and Narendra (two residents sannyasin’s), and I realised that reinforcements had been rushed in to prevent me from doing what I was threatening to do! .. They said they would give me an appointment for the next day, so the next day I came.

My mother came along with me. She was a bit worried and she was worried for different reasons which I did not know about. We sat down and Osho came in. I had a feeling insider as if I were a child who has lost his way, who went out into the world, and then suddenly came back and there was father, his eyes asking, “Where have you been?” I got that feeling.

I suddenly felt at peace and silently I said to him, “I’m back home.” I was sitting beside him on one side and Mukta was sitting next to me, telling me not to pluck

the grass (Darshan was always held outside in the garden when Osho first moved to Poona over two years ago). All this was happening as if I were in a trance.

Suddenly he turned and smiled and said, "Are you ready for sannyas?" So naturally my ego rebelled and I thought, "How dare he ask me a question like this? He hasn't even given me a chance to talk—no time for talking about anything. Let me come to terms first."

And I said, "Well, I've been thinking about it." He said, "Keep thinking then." And as suddenly turned away. There I was left thinking why hadn't I said "Yes"? I mean, what was wrong—I could have said yes. Why did I hesitate?

Then he talked to my mother. He said, "Will you take sannyas?" and she said, "No. I've brought my son." Then he said a very cryptic thing to her, a very strange thing. He said, "Why did you take so long to bring him here?" My mother just gaped at him.

I was fidgeting then because I knew he would not come back to me because I had said, "I'll think about it," So he was finished with me. He had looked at me and I had not responded to his invitation. I thought, "I'm sunk! That's the end of that!" But he looked at me again and said, "Are you ready?" I said quickly, "Yes!" (Laughter)

Maneesha: Did your mother takes sannyas then?

Raj: Not then. But she was shaken by that cryptic

statement. Would you like to know what that meant—when he said, “Why did you take so long?”

My mother told me, “I lost three sons before you came. Three sons were born and then they died. One died at birth, one died at the age of four and another died just before you came. The last son I had lost I had named Sikanander because he was a very handsome boy. He had blond hair and blue eyes. He actually looked like one of those dynamic leaders, so I was taken by him, and everyone in the family said he looked like the elder Sikanander. Then he died—I was grief-stricken.

“Then I conceived you. That night Sikanander came back in my dreams wearing saffron robes and said. “Don’t worry—I’ve come back. You wanted me and I’m back” .. And you were born.”

Then they showed my palm to astrologers and readers of horoscopes. My horoscope was made and a person of great astrological knowledge told my mother,” Your son is going to go towards the religious path if you don’t stop him, and you will lose him, so keep him away.”

When I was four or five years old I used to go with my grandmother to the Krishna temple. I was very fond of Krishna—particularly his picture when, as a small child, he was trying to suck his toe. I carried that picture in my mind and insisted on going to the temple after fighting about it with the whole family.

My mother was very worried that right from the age of five I was going to the temple when other children

were doing mischief and the like. So my grandmother and mother used have fights. My mother said, "Don't take him." My grandmother said. "Why not? If his feelings are towards that, why do you deny him?" Anyway, my mother won the argument and after that I was stopped. I used to become very violent, but they stopped me.

So God was a problem, and right from that young age I attempted to solve this problem.

I was admitted to a school which was based on the Hindu religion and I began to meet people who believed in God and people who didn't believe in God, people who believed in one God people who believed in thirty-three gods-in our religion we have over sixty-six thousand gods and goddesses I think.

I grew up in this confusion in Lahore in Pakistan, and from there we shifted to Calcutta and I had another awful experience. I went to this temple-a Kali temple-and saw a goat being slaughtered in front of an awful looking female goddess with about nine hands and a red tongue sticking out of her mouth. That frightened me silly-I got so scared of religion.

Raj went on to describe how later he was moved to a Christian school was initiated into Christianity.

Raj: I read the Bible and it was fascinating. I fell in love with Jesus. My fondness for the Church kept me out of the usual mischief at School.

Then I graduated and went to St. Xavier's college, and there I changed my beloveds. I took Jesus off the

shelf and moved on to Buddha.

Maneesha: What were you studying?

Raj: I was in science. I was trying to become an engineer—that's what my father wanted me to become.

Buddha was the next person who took my fancy, and that was for a long time. In fact if you came into my room in those days you would find Buddha's in my room. I used to collect faces and busts and all sorts of images and I had all the books on him.

Raj said that as a compromise between "Going into oils"—which is father wanted him to do—and being an actor, which Raj wanted to do—he went into the army. He said though it was a mechanical life, he felt he had to stick to it.

Maneesha: Did you maintain any interest in religion in those days?.

Raj: Buddha was still supreme in my heart. In fact when other people were reading pornographic literature, I used to read Buddha. I used to like pornography too. I used to sneak into that too, of and on—but that was just a break from Buddha (laughter).

Maneesha: So you've been in the army for ..?

Raj: Twenty three years. I had the rank of lieutenant colonel and I had done very well from the point of promotions and things like that. I was very afraid of

the war—even in the trenches—because of that horrible bloody noise of the sirens at night and these bombs coming at you from nowhere creating a feeling of terror. During that time I was very disturbed because I had thought myself to be a brave person and could not understand why I shook with fear.

Maneesha: Can you talk about how life has changed in these two years that you have been a sannyasin and an army officer?

Raj: Before I joined the ashram I did not know that I was a coward. When I joined the ashram I recognised and owned up that I was a coward. In these two years I'm a much braver man. Today I've got the courage to come and say what I want to say and to face my fears.

Osho has given me shelter. I was a lost person. He has helped me to become aware. He has helped me to differentiate between the actions that are negative and those that are positive. I have begun to enjoy life. The third thing that he has done is to fill me with a certain amount of calmness, a certain amount of peace.

I was a very agitated person. I used to go out of my way to pick a fight and to shout and scream and assert my rights. I won't say that he's taken away my ego—I'm very sure of that—but he has certainly put a big dent in it. At least five times out of ten I do not think of myself as the main actor in any situation that takes place. I try to separate myself as the witness, as he keeps saying.

So life has become more full. I mean, I'm beginning to enjoy everything that happens. Even this business of ensuring that there is another job before leaving one profession. I wouldn't have dreamt of doing this four years ago, but with him, with the courage that he's instilled and with the change of approach, the sense of fun, it has become beautiful.

Sometimes I think of my wife and my four children and a feeling of insecurity creeps inside me, but often I have become a witness to this and have said, "Look at this guy indulging in self-pity," and then there is laughter—a two-way laughter.

Maneesha: What has been the attitude of the other officers towards you as a sannyasin?

Raj: Most of them have become a little formal. In my profession we form groups, we form sects, we form companies, we form messes, for the simple reason that we are all floating in a sea of violence and we hold each other's hands. Now suddenly two hands that were there, floating, holding other hands, are suddenly denied them, so they felt deprived

I think I saw in some of them—it wasn't very obvious but I could smell it or sense it—that they wished they had the courage to do the same. But because they could not do it, they ultimately came out with negative thoughts. They condemned me and pitied me and said, "Poor chap. You were so nice and doing so well. Where the hell have you landed yourself? That place (the ashram) is mad and they are all lunatics!"

I would say that most of the officers feel jealous of

me. They wish they could do it too. I've brought a lot of senior officers to the ashram and have gone back very thoughtful—as if they were touched inside but were resisting it.

Others come to our house and when they see us, Usha (his wife) and me, they cannot believe it. They see changes on our faces. These guys sense something and they keep coming. They come here and they listen to his discourses. They see his picture and they want to come to the ashram but because of their profession they are frightened and they've dropped it. But they'll carry the image.. I dream of the day with olive green will change into saffron.

Raj said that he decided finally, with Osho's blessings, to take the plunge—to ask for discharge from the army and to venture into the film world, with the help of an old friend.

Maneesha: how do you feel about being a budding actor?

Raj: There is a part of me that is still very scared. The sannyasin in me says, "Relax. You are under his protection." Then a dialogue starts within me, "Why should he protect you? He does not protect, that's not the way he is. He likes to destroy you, so maybe he's doing this purposefully. Maybe he's taking you out of the security to break you into pieces." Then my fear screams, "I don't want to be broken to pieces".. And so it goes on. But by and large its a happy experience.

It is a beautiful thing. It's like some dresses are tight

fitting and its choking you and suddenly you're taken out of it, never to wear it again. And I couldn't have done it without him, so I feel grateful to him.

Maneesha: Raj, can you talk about your relationship with Osho?

Raj: You see, I'm not totally surrendered to him. I dread that word "surrender". But what happens is that I have periods, certain moments, when I feel I'm totally absorbed in him, he's everything that matters. And then sometimes I hurl my fury at him.. Sometimes total hatred.

Sometimes I have screamed at him. I've sat alone and I've hated him—"Why are you so cruel? Why can't you be a little more available? Why can't I see you every day if I want to? Why can't I talk to you? Why can't I hold your hand? Why are you so distant when you are near? When you are living in Koregaon park and I can come there within ten minutes, why the hell can't I see you?"

These thoughts come and I get emotional, but I think that basically, in my heart, I'm very much in love with him and I feel very ecstatic when I see him. He means a lot to me.

But he's surrounded by a lot of people who are not exactly my cup of tea. They have hidden him in a fog of rules and regulations. I get wild.. I get mad sometimes, when I see so many of these small things, petty things, which often become big things around him. I feel like hitting my head on the walls. The materialistic restrictions—like you can't wear a cap or

don't talk too much, don't walk through the foliage, you know, and things like that—they do disturb.

But basically when I think of him, I feel he's just one with me. He's just the end of all my search—all that which began with Krishna and Buddha and Jesus. I have uprooted all the milestones on my path of search and laid them at his feet.

I don't really hear him talk when I come for his discourses, I don't hear him most of the time but I just imagine him. And I've seen all these faces in his face. I've seen Jesus, I've seen Buddha, I've seen Krishna. Sometimes I see him as a monster with red eyes and teeth coming out of his mouth and sharp incisors and I jerk back with fear. And I see him as soft and gentle and compassionate.. And I wonder what he is really. Then people say that he is a Zen Master; that he is always beating you with a stick, and that it is better to duck out and forget the whole thing.

I'm very sure about him—that he knows all the divine arts and that he's constantly tuned in with us. There is truly no doubt that all the time he knows what is happening with the people who are wearing his mala, and sometimes when you're in trouble, he comes and does something about it. When you're overjoyed, then he'll destroy your confidence, or when you're exultant about some thing he will squash your exultation over any victory. He's a sculptor whose chipping and chopping and cutting out your real face. He does that.. He's forever doing that.

Coming to the ashram daily is a fantastic experience. Being near him is blissful—but I am not very sure of the

full meaning of the words “fantastic” and “blissful“. I have yet to experience them in their totality.

He plays games with us, then we get bitter and angry and frustrated. Let me give you an example. About a month prior to the Ashravakra Gita discourses, Laxmi told Usha that she had been selected to sing the shoklas at the start of each discourse..

You should have seen Usha after that! The Gita was purchased and our music teacher specially detailed to groom her. Everyday our house would resonate with her voice trying to fathom the melodious depths of the MahaGita. Her voice began to improve, to vibrate beautifully. I was surprised to hear her sing so passionately and appealingly. I was thrilled Usha would sit for thirty days at his feet and open the discourse with her song.

And then came the blow. About a week before it, Laxmi changed the singer—just like that! I could see that Usha was crushed, and a terrible anger arose in me. I wanted to come and burn down the ashram—obliterate it forever—for doing such a cruel thing to her. But Usha took it beautifully. She cried every now and then, mostly in seclusion, and then accepted it. Within a couple of days she recovered from the shock.

That was a game he played with us. It helped to explode me.. It made Usha rise higher.

And so he does these things. He gets you bashed about sometimes when you're on a very high road or level which should not be there; he brings you down

with a thud. I think these people—the various workers in the ashram—are there deliberately. They are there to enable him to play those games. He plays chess, moving us like pawns. You meet a person one day and he makes you feel nice, and on the next day he appears to be a freak.

There was this girl and she came and smiled at me and I got her a cup of tea and I felt nice. Next day I came and tried to clown with her and I was brushed aside like I was a dish-rag. This does not happen in society; I mean there you become friends and you remain. Here there are changes, abrupt changes from one phase to another—changes that bring frustrations, that bring loneliness, that bring a lot of emotions out. Sometimes you are burning! Then you laugh at it when you suddenly see what it was all about.

Maneesha: But I love this thing about being here. It is a fantastic freedom. Everyone is so unpredictable. You think that someone is your friend and you find the next day that you can't take anyone for granted. So you're always making new beginnings.

Raj: Yes. He knows exactly what is bothering whom at any time, and if you let him, he does something about it. He is a master of situations—he creates them so that our problems can crystallise and then disappear. He's is a big director of stage plays full of dramatic actors and there's a message in every one of these dramatic actions—every one. If you become a willing actor, then you begin to enjoy them. Otherwise you run.

Maneesha: And still you come back for more!

Raj: Of course! I'll never leave the ashram. As I was telling you, I have finally reached after many births of search.

Maneesha: You feel settled?

Raj: Yes, but how long it will last I cannot say. The ashram is not the place to settle down in. That is what he is always stressing. He says, "You come to me, but for God's sake, don't get attached to me. When you reach a certain point, get up and proceed in your own."

This worries me. I don't want to leave him. Were all parts of him-how can you be separated from him?

Maneesha: Do you think that what is happening here is going to have some historical significance.. That something will happen that will affect the world's consciousness?

Raj: Today in the world a lot of religious heads have come up. There is a big tournament going on in this world-a knock-out tournament-where you have the first and second rounds and so on till the semi-finals and the finals.

I think that Osho is the professional champion in the tournament who is just sitting on the outside watching all these matches going on and knowing that all they will do is just destroy each other. Nobody is going to come out the winner-it will be a knock-all-out. Today what is happening is that you find a god man on every street corner that you turn. Preachers have sprung up like mushrooms.

In my opinion he is above all these things—much above. The historical significance is that his overwhelming compassion or whatever you feel like calling it, will absorb all others. Vital living forces emanating from his being is reaching out to all corners of the globe and drawing searchers towards him..

But what happens after he goes away? One day he will disappear, and I'm a little worried because then a big business house will be left behind selling dead words to the dying.

Jesus was a beautiful historical phenomenon, but once his image disintegrated on the cross, Christianity reared its commercial head. Church bells ring like alarm clocks, shifting people from a closed- eyed sleep to an open-eyed one.

He says this himself—that once he goes, these people will start something similar. There will be temples everywhere in his name and so it will become a doctrine or religious dogma. So then what he really stands for might peel off. That happens in history always. So I don't know. I think it will happen here too. But while he's alive, I think he's already a phenomena, because he's already got historical significance in the sense that today people are actually talking about him, everywhere thinking about him, everywhere wondering, "What are we missing by not being with him?"

I hide my mala once a while. I'm a very big coward. I hide it and I hate hiding it. But it's something I can't do without. Once I went to the office without it, and I ran back in panic and did not feel right until I had

put it on. But I hide it. I'm a little scared, you know, to face a discussion, and sometimes I hide the mala under my shirt when I am going to see a person who is truly a disbeliever and who might make a lot of fuss. So I say, "Why invite the fuss?" But I know that this is just to justify my action of cowardice.

Once I had gone to see a director in Bombay and I felt that he was one of those traditionally religious government servants, so I hid my mala under my shirt. While I was talking to him and leaning forward saying something very important, Osho popped out! The mala emerged between the buttons of my shirt!

He saw it and I noticed his expression change, as if he was not listening to me. He said, "Oh, you're an Osho fan." I said, "Yes, you put it aptly. I'm his fan." The director cut our meeting short after that. He was more embarrassed than angry.

Osho has definitely made a lot of impact but I think his impact is more on the western world. We Indians have not felt much because we already consider ourselves so religious. We feel that we already know what he's saying and we automatically put up a barrier, whereas the Western people are more open, more at zero level and ready to rise positively. But most of the Indians are below zero, on the negative side, and it's a stiffer climb for them. Many run away angry and affronted. So his impact is much more on the West

I sometimes feel that he has deliberately stayed on in India because of this country's religious heritage and the vibrations of old Masters. If he had operated

from the West however, his message would have gone much faster.

Maneesha: Don't you think he would have become just one of the mob, as you said, if he had gone to, say, America?

Raj: Mobs will be there where there are persons like him, but he would not become one of the mob—he would have controlled the mobs instead.

In America there are a lot of so-called gurus who profess to have all these powers—but they have not. I think he has a uniqueness that would have separated him from the crowds and the mobs would have melted out into a flock of devotees. I'm sure of it.

You see the difference there is. There are a lot of Westerners who would like to come to him, but due to various circumstances—maybe domestic or financial only a few turn up. But these few are authentic seekers. They have given up lucrative jobs, wealth, ego and a life of comfort to come and see him. Reading his book or casually talking about him with one another has been sufficient means to trigger them across an ocean towards him

There are other Westerners who are on a drug trip who were just wandering around who have also surrendered to him – they come, and the cream of the Western world comes to him too. The effect is similar—they get converted. He plays games with them and they respond.

But we Indians react to his games. We become violent

critics and cast aspersions and sometimes deluge the ashram with a flood of negativity. We are stupid. The stupidity is born out of our pre-knowledge and religious beliefs. We defy him, we ask for miracles and proofs. But he is patient with us. He tries to free us from our ritualistic cages. He is patient and compassionate because he, being one of us, knows what's inside us—the garbage and the muck collected over centuries of religious mumbo-Jumbo. But in the eyes of the Western sannyasin, I see total faith. Our surrender is in stages and stage-like.

Maneesha: If we had total faith, we'd be enlightened!

Raj: No, I'll put it this way. Maybe you're not surrendered to, maybe you have your own thoughts, but the point is that this is not for most of the time. You have put yourself in his hands. We're the people who fight.

Sometimes I get wisdom acquired from previous births or previous experiences and I resist and doubt and there is a conflict. I experienced jealousy and I shrink from people, sannyasins, here. The Indians come here and within a few days they start believing that they are more enlightened than he! I often walk out in disgust. I say, "Just what the hell is happening here?" They are trying to repeat what he is doing and trying to give you the idea that they are already there. They even have the expression when you meet some of them, with their half closed eyes. It is sickening because I don't see that in the Westerners, I mean they are more straight-forward. That is why I think they are more receptive to what he is.

They are receptive, they are open. They are absolutely there. We've got lots of blocks and it's taking time to remove those blocks. He is constantly trying but I don't know if it is going to work.

What happens at his discourses? I sometimes observe people before Osho comes. You see their faces: the Westerners are interested, terribly interested, waiting for him to come, but ninety percent of the Indians are looking at the foreign females and scratching their backsides or wondering if they're sitting near enough so that if they feel bored they can leave. Some are taking notes. Others are exaggerated in their reactions like vigorous nodding of their heads and a pseudo blissed-out expression.

I think the ashram would have been better abroad. Those Indians who really cared would have followed him. They would have been the real McCoy's—the real genuine articles. They'd be into Osho only. All the shopkeepers and businessmen and exploiters would have been eliminated—the ones who came to the ashram to get material blessings like money and prosperity.

My mother joined him initially with that in mind.

Maneesha: She's taken sannyas now?

Raj: Yes, she has. She has slowly begun to understand. She has realised the beauty of acceptance and surrender. She has converted her ritualistic prayer into a Thanksgiving. I had to do a lot of talking with her, trying to destroy her traditional beliefs, and at those times I was surprised at what came out of me. Some

words just flowed. I could not own them as mine.

Maneesha: Maybe it's him coming through you.

Raj: That's just the thing. I have felt so many times that I wasn't talking-Osho was talking through me. And then I have said to myself, "No. Stop dreaming. You are a very foolish man."

Maneesha: But it doesn't matter, does it, if it is having an effect? You are aware that it might be him or that it might be just you-so what!

Raj: No, but I am in no position to talk about what he says. I'll tell you why-because the people I come across are wise Indians-they're so learned and they produce things from books, and I have no answer. Then I feel I'm letting him down and I think it is better not to talk.

Normally they ask me, "What is he saying?" I say that I myself only partially understand, so why don't they come themselves and see if they can understand, I cannot explain it to them. They say, "Can you ascend from sex to super-consciousness?" I say, "I have not reached super-consciousness. Sex is where I am, so how can I explain it?" I feel there is no use trying to explain Osho because he has so much understanding. We try to understand it at whatever level we can.

So preaching his teaching or bringing out what he says or even trying to tell a joke, loses its intensity. Once I tried to tell a Mulla Nasrudin-it went flat. Here during his discourse, they had laughed so much at it!

A few days later, after he had passed through the Encounter group that Osho recommended he do, Raj talked about the experience.

Raj: the encounter group was a very special occurrence for me in my life because it was the first time that I came face to face with myself—that's the first thing that happened. And secondly there was a feeling, that was becoming very deep inside me, that although I realise that the westerners had a different approach to the business of sannyas from the Indians and I could forgive them, nevertheless there was something inside me that was boiling against this fact—that why were they allowed to do things like Encounter groups and various other things and we Indians not allowed to?

When Osho said to do the group there was a feeling of tremendous fear on the one hand, and also exhilaration on the other, because it was something that I wanted to go into yet something that I was very scared to go into. It was a mixture of feelings

The terrifying thing was that there was too much waiting time before the group started. It was like waiting at the dentist and you don't know when he's going to drill you. During that time I had quite a bit of torture—I mean, the imagination took over and there were exaggerated impressions of what was going to happen—that I would be making love to women and people would be watching it would be one big sexual debacle.

So with that thought, that view, I went to this group. When I was through it, when I was finished with it, it

was in one way of speaking much more than I could imagine, and yet in another way it brought something that I did not know was possible—something that people sometimes try for years to bring about. It just happened in seven days.

Now my impressions about the group itself was that Teertha was the group leader, yet I could feel right throughout that Osho was there. This was the first time in my life, having become a sannyasin and having surrendered to him in whatsoever way I could, that I got an intense feeling of his presence. I had the feeling that he was there, that he was also one of the persons participating.

I felt he was there pushing the buttons and exerting a little pressure here, helping out at another place where the mind was getting a little choked up and a person didn't have the courage to come out and say. This was a very very beautiful feeling.

The other thing that happened in this group is that as far as I'm concerned, it's knocked out a lot of phobias and imaginary fears that I had about sex, about human relationships. Although I've had a Western type of education and in fact people here in the ashram say that I'm more of a Westerner than an Indian, still I had an Indian mother and Indian parents, and it was an Indian village where I stayed, so the earlier impressionable part of my life had this sex as a very big taboo, as a very sinful thing, as something that was done in darkness, under cover of darkness.

In the group this very big block was totally shattered. I got the feeling that the body was not something to

be sheltered or hidden or disguised or covered up. It's a beautiful thing, people are beautiful, physical relationships are just like anything else—like hunger and thirst—and there wasn't so much importance to it as one would imagine that it deserved.. And yet it was beautiful. So human relationship and sex taboos were lifted totally.

I also got the feeling in this group—a very beautiful feeling—that every one of us has got the tendency to single ourselves out as a unique person who has the most awful troubles in the world. Now what was beautiful about this group was that there was sixteen of us—and when the sixteen people opened up at one time or another, I suddenly realised—it was a very pleasant sort of surprise—that all of us had almost the same problems: the mother complex, the hate of somebody in the family, a girl who'd let you down, a love affair, a search for the truth, wanting to become better but becoming worse, a little bit of drug addiction. Whoever it was, I found it was equally there, and that there were sixteen of us with almost identical problems.

I have lost my fear of the opposite sex. I have lost my fear of the same sex. Before I went to the group I thought that due to a few homosexual experiences during my youth, possibly I was a homosexual and I was trying to fight it. Just the opposite thing came out—the truth came out that I was deliberately holding onto these things. My mind was doing it and playing tricks on me.

In fact my most beautiful experience after the group was kissing Teertha on the lips and it was very

beautiful. There was nothing to it and.. Before, I would even feel uncomfortable if I was sitting with a man and if he was edging a little too much towards me without meaning it, I would feel jittery.

Similarly with women I was playing tricks, playing games. I could not look a woman in the eye and tell her what I felt because I thought “this may lead to sex,” And then “sex is a terrible thing” and “it would ruin everything“. Because what I was brought up to believe was that sex is not the culmination of the pleasure but the end so you’ll ruin it.

So all those taboos and all those fears and all those manias are just gone—I’m rid of them. And I feel much lighter. From people I brush against I get the same reaction. They say, “The film has gone, and there is a stamp of authenticity on you,”—which is a beautiful thing to hear because normally you are used to hearing such words as flattery but now you can feel they are real.

Maneesha: So the monster came out completely?

Raj: The monster is still there, but it’s lost a lot of weight! (Laughter) I don’t think the monster has gone out completely—it’s still very much there. But it’s much smaller inside and more impotent than it used to be. I mean, I know that it is there, and it knows that I know it is there (laughter), so there’s no problem anymore.

Maneesha: But at least you had a glimpse of yourself through the group?

Raj: Yes, and I would say it is guaranteed that the

fifteen others also had a glimpse.

Raj: Yes, and I would say it is guaranteed that the fifteen others also had a glimpse. You know when you've had this glimpse and you sit across from a person who's also had this glimpse, then there is a very strange merging. Did you know? You looked into each other's eyes, you didn't say a thing and yet volumes were said. Suddenly there was a two-way transmission—just from the eyes, from the body, sitting close.. Even by touch.. and it was a touch that was totally pure. I've never felt this type of human relationship before.

Finally what I can say about this group is that I think everybody should do it—all Indians, all foreigners, Chinese—any nationality, any race, any colour. This is a group which I think is very important. It may happen that in the case of the Indians who are locked up very strongly, who've got very strong walls inside them, it may require a little harder work—the group may even need to lengthen in duration—but I think what it does is something very very beautiful.

It suddenly gives you a glimpse, an insight into the real you. It may be for seconds, it may be just one hour, half an hour, and it does give you something to.. I won't say “work for, but something to yearn for.. It is something that you wish would happen again. It is, in other words, a preview of a very good movie. And when you know that the movies inside you then your not just satisfied with a few shorts—then you want the whole movie to come out.